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Chair: Mr. Dempsey (Vice-Chair) ..... (Canada)

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(a) Promotion and protection of the rights of children (*continued*)

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In the absence of Mr. Hilale (Morocco), Mr. Dempsey (Canada), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 28: Social development (*continued*)

(b) Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family (*continued*) (A/C.3/70/L.11/Rev.1)

Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.11/Rev.1: Policies and programmes involving youth

1. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

2. **Mr. Mendonça e Moura** (Portugal), introducing the draft resolution, said that there were over 1.8 billion young people in the world, which constituted one fourth of the population. Youth issues were cross-cutting and affected all Member States. The draft resolution therefore did not focus on a particular region, but provided a useful basis for action and policies for youth development at the national, regional and international levels. It highlighted the connection between the World Programme of Action for Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which together represented an opportunity to tackle the challenges affecting youth development. The draft resolution also acknowledged the positive contributions of the youth representatives to the General Assembly.

3. **Mr. Lupan** (Republic of Moldova) said that the draft resolution covered many complex issues on which Member States sometimes took diametrically opposed positions. Nevertheless, the balanced text of the draft resolution represented a collective effort; he hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

4. In paragraph 18, the commas should be deleted before and after "in contravention of applicable international law".

5. **Mr. Ciss** (Senegal), said that the informal consultations had focused on strategic goals related to issues such as poverty eradication, education, health, HIV/AIDS, climate change, the empowerment of women, gender equality, decent employment, globalization and armed conflict. It was vital to promote the contributions of young people in that regard. The draft resolution sought to benefit from the demographic dividend and enhance efforts to ensure the full and effective implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth, based on the commitments made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

6. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia And Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Eritrea, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Republic Of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe had joined the sponsors.

Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.11/Rev.1, as orally revised, was adopted.

7. **Ms. Tzeggai** (Denmark), speaking also on behalf of Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Colombia, Croatia, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Palau, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and Uruguay, said that her delegation attached great importance to youth-related issues and strongly believed in the core tenants of the resolution: encouraging a partnership approach, supporting a democratic youth voice and encouraging strategic approaches to tackling the prevailing issues facing young people.

8. Half the global population was under the age of 25, yet young people suffered from one of the worst reproductive and sexual health situations in society. The rights, opportunities and choices of young women and girls were particularly undermined by pervasive gender-based discrimination and violence. Young people around the world were increasingly highlighting sexual and reproductive health and rights as a priority in recommendations to their Governments. Those rights were integral to preventing maternal deaths, HIV infections and early pregnancy and to protecting girls from violence, abuse and discrimination.

9. According to the World Health Organization, 16 million adolescent girls between the ages of 15 and 19 years and 1 million girls under the age of 15 years gave birth annually. Pregnancy and childbirth were the leading cause of death for adolescent girls in low- and middle-income countries, and an increasing number of young women were developing obstetric fistula as a result of giving birth at an early age. In addition, 39,000 girls under the age of 18 were married every day, thus increasing the chance of early pregnancy. Stillbirth and death in the first week of life were 50 per cent higher among babies born to mothers under the age of 20.

10. Globally, an estimated 5 million young people lived with HIV; new infection rates for young women were twice as high as for young men and only approximately one third of young men and one fourth of young women knew how to prevent the spread of HIV. Inadequate access to information and services for adolescents hindered their ability to protect themselves from contracting HIV and impeded efforts to reduce new infections.

11. Young women and girls were subjected to various forms of violence and harmful practices, including domestic abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, exploitation, trafficking and female genital mutilation. As many as 50 per cent of sexual assaults were committed against girls under the age of 16 years, and some 30 per cent of women and girls reported that their first sexual experience was forced.

12. The sexual and reproductive rights of young people, especially adolescent girls and young women, must be recognized, respected and protected as human rights, including through educational, legal and policy measures. Her delegation advocated for the inclusion of references to sexual and reproductive health and rights in resolutions, because adolescents, in particular women and girls, suffered tremendously from a lack of information and insufficient access to health care and services, which violated the human rights of each individual concerned and represented a major challenge to development efforts. Their ability to exercise their sexual and reproductive rights was imperative to achieving gender equality, educational attainment, economic development, poverty reduction and political participation. Her delegation would therefore continue to welcome and support the explicit reinforcement of the sexual and reproductive rights of young people in future resolutions.

13. **Ms. Smaila** (Nigeria) said that science, technology and innovation had the power to inform society and improve economic competitiveness and resilience. Those areas propelled and sustained development efforts by generating knowledge and technological and social innovations that met the demands of society. It was important to consider how investments in those areas could affect youth development prospects and their capacity to contribute to society. It was encouraging to see youth engagement in decision-making and development, which offered the unique opportunity to build capacity and create sustained partnerships that would culminate in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Youth participation was essential to achieving and implementing any sustainable development agenda.

14. Future resolutions should prioritize the importance of the family in providing guidance to youth, and States should recognize the active role of parents in the moral development of their children. Parents must be fully involved at every stage of the child's mental growth until maturity, including health, education and upbringing. Parental autonomy could not be overemphasized, particularly in guiding their children on cultural issues and forms of entertainment that demonstrated respect for human dignity. Young people felt enormous pressure from outside their homes to participate in undesirable activities; with parental guidance, they were able to develop informed and decent minds and contribute meaningfully to society.

15. **Ms. Al-Temimi** (Qatar), speaking on behalf of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, said that the Council's member States supported the draft resolution. The importance of involving young people in social and economic life constituted a national priority for those Governments and had been incorporated into their policies and goals. The member States welcomed the paragraph highlighting the role played by the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth with a mandate to ensure that the voices of young people were heard throughout the United Nations system. They would endeavour to implement the resolution in line with their own values, religious beliefs, laws and national interests.

Agenda item 29: Advancement of women (*continued*)

(a) Advancement of women (*continued*)
(A/C.3/70/L.7/Rev.1)

Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.7/Rev.1: Violence against women migrant workers

16. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

17. **Ms. Yparraguirre** (Philippines), introducing the draft resolution, said that there were a few oral revisions to be made to the draft resolution. In the twentieth preambular paragraph, a comma should be inserted after the words, "informal brokers". In paragraph 7, the words "and care" should be deleted, as should the words "and cooperation". Paragraph 7 would thus revert to the language used in resolution 68/137. In paragraph 9, the word "by" should be inserted before the words "facilitating", "exchanging" and "fostering".

18. While more States had made progress in implementing global normative and policy frameworks to protect women migrant workers from discrimination and violence, key gaps persisted in the development of targeted measures, the systematic nationwide collection and dissemination of disaggregated data, research and analysis to inform and evaluate policies and programmes, and the provision of information regarding access to justice for women migrant workers.

19. The draft resolution recognized that the demand for migrant care work was rising, and that some migrant workers engaging in informal care work, particularly women, faced serious human rights abuses owing to the invisible nature of their workplace. It also recognized that one of the key issues of labour exploitation that women migrant workers suffered was linked to the unscrupulous practices of some recruitment agencies and informal brokers, and that the vulnerability of women migrant workers highlighted the increasingly complex migration contexts and channels, where they could find themselves in life-threatening situations when entering other countries. The resolution encouraged Governments to address the push and pull factors contributing to the irregular migration of women, including the need to resolve care deficits in labour-importing countries and to regulate, formalize and protect the terms and conditions of employment and care work. It also encouraged States to consider designing and implementing financial literacy training for women migrant workers and their families. She hoped that the resolution would be adopted by consensus.

20. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Bangladesh, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Burkina Faso, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ghana, Guinea, Honduras, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Mexico, Morocco, Nicaragua, Panama, Rwanda, Senegal, Timor-Leste, Uganda, Uruguay and Venezuela had joined the sponsors.

Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.7/Rev.1, as orally revised, was adopted.

21. **The Chair** suggested that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 55/488, the Committee should take note of the following documents: the report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its fifty-eighth, fifty-ninth and sixtieth sessions (A/70/38); the report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/70/124) and the note by the Secretary-General on the report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences (A/70/209).

22. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 65: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions (*continued*)
(A/C.3/70/L.62/Rev.1)

Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.62/Rev.1: Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa

23. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

24. **Mr. Fawundu** (Sierra Leone), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the African Group, said that the draft resolution reflected the consensus of all parties while highlighting the funding gaps and the deteriorating situation of the camps in Africa.

25. Presenting oral revisions to the text, he said that, in the fourth preambular paragraph, the words "refugees, returnees" should be replaced with "refugee, returnee". In the seventh preambular paragraph, the words "has led to" should be replaced with the phrase "are a major factor leading to". A new sixteenth

preambular paragraph should be added; it would read, "*Recognizing also* the need to encourage increased efforts towards voluntary return and local integration." In paragraph 2, the phrase "in order to ensure its wider implementation" should be added at the end of the paragraph. In paragraph 9, the word "refugee" should be replaced with "displaced". In paragraph 13, the words "for refugees" should be deleted. In paragraph 25, the phrase "which is not in line with the foreseen increase of displacement figures in Africa and the lack of durable solutions" should be deleted. In paragraph 26, the word "unearmarked" should be deleted. In paragraph 28, the phrase "and recalls that those solutions include voluntary repatriation and, where appropriate and feasible, local integration and resettlement in a third country" should be inserted after the word "context". Paragraphs 29 and 30 should be combined. A new paragraph 30 should be added; it would read, "*Encourages* African States, together with developments and humanitarian actors, to work closely on multi-year strategies for refugees and internally displaced persons."

26. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Albania, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Honduras, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Timor-Leste and Turkey had joined the sponsors.

Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.62/Rev.1, as orally revised, was adopted.

27. **The Chair** suggested that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 55/488, the Committee should take note of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa (A/70/337).

28. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 67: Report of the Human Rights Council (*continued*) (A/C.3/70/L.66)

Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.66: Report of the Human Rights Council

29. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

30. **Mr. Fawundu** (Sierra Leone), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the African Group, said that the Group attached importance to General Assembly resolution 60/251 and the resulting institution-building package that had served as the foundation of the Human Rights Council and its mandate. It was imperative for the Human Rights Council, as a subsidiary body of the General Assembly, to report on an annual basis to the Assembly. In that regard, the Group remained committed to ensuring that the provisions of subparagraphs 5 (c), 5 (i) and 5 (j) of resolution 60/251 were implemented. Developments in the Human Rights Council, including the adoption of a constructive, cooperative approach, had contributed to furnishing a suitable foundation for overcoming past obstacles to consolidating universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The approach rested on the provision of advice and necessary technical and financial support upon the request of national Governments, given their primary responsibility to promote and protect human rights of all their citizens.

31. The report of the Human Rights Council contained recommendations of the utmost importance to many Member States. The principles of non-discrimination and equality were cross-cutting principles in efforts for the full realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. The Group was deeply concerned about attempts to introduce and impose new notions, such as sexual orientation and gender identity, that were not referenced in international human rights law. It strongly rejected any attempt to undermine the international human rights system by seeking to impose concepts pertaining to social matters, including private and individual conduct, that fell outside the internationally agreed human rights legal framework. Such attempts constituted a disregard for the universality of human rights, delved into matters that fell within the domestic jurisdiction of States and ran counter to the principles of the sovereignty of States and of non-intervention contained in the Charter of the United Nations. People were not inherently vulnerable, but some individuals and groups found themselves in vulnerable situations due to a number of factors, including their socioeconomic situation. Focusing on notions on which there was no international agreement only served to divide the Human Rights Council and undermine its balanced and egalitarian approach to the promotion and protection of all human rights. The Group called on all Member States to refrain from giving priority to the rights of certain individuals at the expense of other internationally agreed rights, which was contrary to the principles of non-discrimination and equality, and urged all Member States to step up efforts towards the

total elimination of all forms of racism, xenophobia and related intolerance. The Group of African States had introduced the draft resolution to express its continuous support for the important work of the Council and looked forward to the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus, which would provide a message of strong support to the Council.

32. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the Russian Federation and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela had joined the sponsors.

33. **Ms. Belskaya** (Belarus) said that Belarus noted the focus of the Human Rights Council on social and economic rights, the right to development and the situation of women, children, persons with disabilities and the elderly, and its support for the institution of the family. There was, however, a growing tendency towards adopting decisions by vote. The Council's voting mechanism was being used to promote approaches that had not been agreed upon as so-called standards; these approaches were then further promoted in the Third Committee and the General Assembly, where all States were called on to follow such standards unconditionally. Human Rights Council mechanisms, primarily country-specific resolutions and mandates, enabled groups of countries that had the necessary financial and organizational resources to legitimize their own one-sided measures against recalcitrant States and Governments. Belarus could not support such an approach and, given that the report put forward for adoption contained a decision that contravened the fundamental principles of international cooperation and the development of friendly relations between States, was compelled to request a vote on the resolution. It understood that the resolution was procedural, but the report itself and the work of the Council was not. Its request for a vote was also a call on certain groups of countries to return to the fundamental principles of international cooperation.

34. **Mr. Israeli** (Israel) said that everyday around the world, human rights were being violated in the worst kind of ways; people were being discriminately targeted by barrel bombs, hanged for so-called moral crimes and sold as sex slaves in city centres. Nevertheless, the Human Rights Council deliberately ignored those violations and continued its biased fixation on the only free democracy in the Middle East, the State of Israel. In 2014, the Council had established a commission of inquiry, which had been followed by a resolution that had distorted the truth, and had completely ignored the violations of international human rights and humanitarian law committed by Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups. Moreover, the Council did not seem to care about the human rights of Israelis. Thousands of missiles and mortars had been fired indiscriminately on Israeli cities, hospitals and schools, yet the Council had never mentioned the word "Hamas" in any of its resolutions.

35. The Council's conduct came as no surprise, as it had been taken over by some of the worst human rights violators in the world and had completely abandoned its founding principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity. In previous weeks, leaders had taken advantage of the Council's proceedings to spread their propaganda, defame a Member State and incite violence. Instead of advancing, the Council seemed to be reverting to the days of the dysfunctional Human Rights Committee. His harsh words were supported by figures: the Council had adopted over 60 country-specific resolutions against Israel and only 55 against the rest of the world; it had held 7 special sessions on Israel out of a total of 23; and it had established six fact-finding missions and commissions on Israel and only six on other countries. There was also a permanent item on its agenda to hold a separate debate on Israel. He urged all delegations with a genuine interest in promoting the human rights agenda around the world to voice their concern. Given that the report continued to perpetuate the politicized agenda against Israel, his delegation would vote against the resolution.

36. **Mr. Qassem Agha** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his country had actively participated in the establishment of the Human Rights Council and had voted in favour of the report and the resolutions contained therein for many years. It was regrettable that the report of the Human Rights Council encompassed the resolutions related to the situation in Syria, which were based on media reports that had relied on a single source of information. The report was also in line with the political aims of certain countries that did not want to see prosperity for Syria, its Government or its people. Previous resolutions had continually ignored the acts committed by armed terrorist groups and the need to disarm them and to call on the relevant countries to stop their ideological, political, financial and media support of those groups. His delegation would therefore abstain from voting on the draft resolution. He emphasized that such a vote

did not change his delegation's steadfast and principled position supporting the recommendations in the report pertaining to the Israeli violations of human rights in the occupied Syrian Golan and Palestine, which were just causes that deserved the support of all Member States. The representative of Israel should not forget that he was representing an occupying Power and the Zionist entity occupying the land of others, which was supporting the Nusrah Front and providing medical treatment to the terrorists of that organization in the town of Safed. The Organization had documented the crimes of the Zionist entity against the Palestinian and Syrian peoples for more than 60 years. The references to peace and democracy by the representative of Israel were shameless lies that nobody believed any longer. His delegation reiterated its principled position rejecting interference by any State in the internal affairs of other States under the pretext of protecting human rights and rejected the resolutions of the Council that exclusively targeted specific countries.

37. **Mr. Ri** Song Chol (Democratic People's Republic Korea) said that his delegation supported the request made by Belarus to vote on the draft resolution.

Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting

38. **Ms. Lucas** (Luxembourg), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the European Union had expressed concerns about the draft resolution since its inception, on considerations of principle as well as procedure. The Third Committee should consider only individual recommendations contained in the report of the Human Rights Council, not the report as a whole. Since the compromise reached in the General Assembly had been institutionalized as a result of the review of the Council's work, it had been the understanding of the European Union that the matter had been settled. The interactive dialogue in the General Assembly plenary allowed delegations to express their views on the work and functioning of the Council. It was also regrettable that there had been no opportunity to discuss the implications of the draft resolution at an open meeting in a timely manner, as many Member States had had questions about the text. For those reasons, the States members of the European Union would abstain from voting.

39. **Ms. Nescher** (Liechtenstein), speaking also on behalf of Albania, Australia, Canada, Iceland, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland, said that his delegation supported the Human Rights Council but was once again compelled to abstain from the voting because of procedural concerns. In accordance with the outcome of the review of the work and functioning of the Human Rights Council contained in General Assembly resolution 65/281, it was the responsibility of the General Assembly plenary to take action on the report of the Council. For its part, the Third Committee should consider only the Council's recommendations. It was regrettable that the draft resolution continued to disregard the understanding contained in the General Assembly resolution by supporting consideration of the Council's report in the Third Committee.

40. **Ms. Razzouk** (United States of America) said that her country also had concerns with the resolution and would continue to abstain from voting. The United States was proud to have worked with other nations to pass some strong resolutions at the Human Rights Council concerning the most pressing country-specific and dramatic human rights issues; however, it remained deeply concerned about the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel and about certain other resolutions that had been adopted in 2015. Nevertheless, the Council had taken some important actions towards fulfilling its mandate to promote and protect human rights, which included working with States such as the Central African Republic and Somalia and drafting strong resolutions that addressed the grave human rights situations in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Eritrea, Iran, South Sudan, Sudan and Syria. Her Government was also proud of the cooperative resolution on Sri Lanka, which was the result of close collaboration between the United States and the Government of Sri Lanka. The United States continued to view the resolution on the report of the Human Rights Council as procedurally unnecessary and was also concerned that, in previous years, some delegations had used it to attempt to undermine decisions made by the Human Rights Council. The resolution continued to be introduced without sufficient time for delegations to engage on the text and without any opportunity for open informal consultations on the resolution. For those reasons, the United States would continue to abstain on the resolution.

41. *A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.66.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin,

Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Belarus, Israel.

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Eritrea, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Myanmar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

42. *Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.66 was adopted by 111 votes to 2, with 59 abstentions.**

43. **Ms. Vadiati** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, despite the existence of cooperative mechanisms in the Human Rights Council, such as the universal periodic review, it was regrettable that certain States continued to politicize human rights and engage chronically in confrontational and coercive measures in the Human Rights Council. Those States persisted in the counterproductive and politically motivated practice of introducing country-specific resolutions for a select list of countries, while turning a blind eye their own dire human rights situations and those of their allies. Iran strongly rejected such harmful motives, as they were not conducive to effective and impartial work, undermined human rights as a whole and discredited the United Nations human rights mechanisms for political motivations. For that reason her delegation had abstained from the voting.

44. Iran disassociated itself from the sections of the reports of the Human Rights Council (A/70/53 and A/70/53/Add.1) pertaining to the counterproductive so-called resolution on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

45. **Ms. Garcia Gutierrez** (Costa Rica) said that Costa Rica fully supported the work of the Human Rights Council, its resolutions and recommendations. As a country committed to human rights and the mechanisms of the Organization that promoted and protected those rights, Costa Rica believed that it was vital to preserve the work and decisions of the Human Rights Council. Nevertheless, her delegation had abstained from voting. It was her country's position that the report of the Human Rights Council should be considered and adopted in the General Assembly plenary, and only the recommendations contained in the report should be considered by the Third Committee, in accordance with subparagraph 5 (j) of General Assembly resolution 60/251 and paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 65/281. She hoped that in the future those concerns would be taken into account and the text would be in line with the agreements that had been reached during the review of the Human Rights Council.

* The delegation of Malawi subsequently informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

46. **Mr. Tin** (Myanmar) said that his country was against country-specific resolutions, which ran counter to the principles of objectivity, impartiality and non-politicization. There should be no further country-specific resolutions, whether in the Human Rights Council or in the work of the Third Committee. For that reason his delegation had abstained from voting.

47. **Ms. Vadiati** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the double standards and politicized policies of the United States regarding human rights issues had been clearly demonstrated in its delegation's explanation of vote before the voting. While the Human Rights Council criticized and condemned the sixty years of violations of human rights by the occupying power in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the United States supported the occupying Power and the country-specific resolution and rejected the violation of human rights by its allies.

Agenda item 68: Promotion and protection of the rights of children (*continued*)

(a) Promotion and protection of the rights of children (*continued*) (A/C.3/70/L.28/Rev.1)

Draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.28/Rev.1: Rights of the child

48. **The Chair** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

49. **Ms. Lucas** (Luxembourg), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the European Union and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, read out oral revisions to the draft resolution. Paragraph 11 should read: "Reaffirms paragraphs 15 to 19 of its resolution 68/147, and urges all States parties to intensify their efforts to comply with their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child to protect children in matters relating to registration, family relations and adoption or other forms of alternative care, and, in cases of international parental or family child abduction, encourages States to consider accession to, or ratification of, the Hague Convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction which takes into consideration the principle of the best interests of the child and to engage in bilateral and, when appropriate, multilateral cooperation to resolve those cases, by facilitating, inter alia, the return of the child to his or her country or habitual residence where the appropriate court can make a custody decision, taking into consideration the principle of the best interests of the child."

50. Paragraph 48 should be revised to read "*Expresses its deep concern* about the growing number of attacks, as well as threats of attacks against schools, and recognizes the grave impact of such attacks on children's and teachers' safety, as well as on the full realization of the right to education, further expresses its concern that the military use of schools in contravention of applicable international law may also affect the safety of children and teachers and the right of the child to education, and encourages all States to strengthen efforts in order to prevent the military use of schools in contravention of international law".

51. In subparagraph 49 (m), the word "necessary" should be replaced with the words "all feasible" and the phrase "and protected persons" with the phrase "as well as persons entitled to protection".

52. The resolution would provide a good basis for the Committee's consideration of the promotion and protection of the rights of the child in the years to come, especially with a view to enhancing the realization of the right to education of all children.

53. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Canada, Guinea, Japan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Maldives, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Timor-Leste and Turkey had joined the sponsors.

54. **Mr. Fawundu** (Sierra Leone), speaking on behalf of the African Group, introduced an oral amendment to subparagraph 49 (u), which should be replaced with the following text: "To develop, where appropriate with the support of international organizations, civil society and non-governmental organizations, policies and programmes, giving priority to formal, informal and non-formal education programmes, including age-appropriate sex education, with appropriate direction and guidance from parents and legal guardians, that support adolescents and enable them to acquire relevant and adequate knowledge and information in a manner consistent with their evolving capacities, develop self-esteem and take responsibility for their own lives, and to place special focus on programmes to educate women and men, especially parents, about the importance of children's physical and mental health and well-being and the need to develop and maintain respectful relationships between girls and boys."

55. The proposed paragraph contained language identical to that in paragraph 6 of the draft resolution on the girl child (A/C.3/70/L.29/Rev.1), which had been adopted by consensus. The purposes of education programmes referred to in the present subparagraph 49 (u) were not in line with the obligations of Member States as reflected in articles 28 and 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child related to children's education. The African Group had made a reservation and disassociated itself from the same language in the agreed conclusions of the fifty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and subparagraph 48 (l) of resolution A/69/157 and continued to stridently oppose that language in order to maintain the principles and purposes of the United Nations.

56. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that since just three States members of the United Nations that were members of the African Group were sponsors of the draft resolution, the proposed amendment could not be deemed to have been introduced on behalf of all the States members of the African Group.

57. **Mr. Fawundu** (Sierra Leone) said that he had introduced the proposed amendment in his national capacity.

58. **Ms. Mozolina** (Russian Federation), speaking on a point of order, asked what rules of procedure prevented a delegation that was sponsoring a resolution from also supporting an amendment to the resolution. Delegations had the right to determine their own position on submitted documents and proposals. A sponsor could surely support an amendment that did not alter the essence of the resolution and that might even improve its substance.

59. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the long-standing practice was to consider any changes introduced to a draft resolution by the main sponsor or a sponsor to be revisions. Amendments, on the other hand, were considered to be hostile in nature, unless they had not been the subject of prior consultations with the delegation proposing the amendment; it was therefore procedurally awkward to have a sponsor of a resolution introduce an amendment to its own draft resolution. If the proposal was brought to a vote, nothing in the rules of procedure prevented a sponsor of the draft resolution from voting in favour of a hostile amendment.

60. **Ms. Lucas** (Luxembourg) said that the proposed oral amendment was not agreeable to the main sponsors of the resolution. Her delegation, on behalf of the sponsors, therefore called for a vote on the amendment.

61. **Ms. Abdelkawy** (Egypt) said that, on the basis of the explanation provided by the Secretariat, there was no rule of procedure stating that if delegations pertaining to a regional group were sponsoring a resolution, the whole group was impeded from presenting an amendment. In her capacity as the coordinator of the African Group, she assured the Committee that a decision had been taken by the African Group of Ambassadors to introduce the amendment presented by Sierra Leone on behalf of the African Group. Since there was no rule of procedure impeding that, the African Group was still introducing and sponsoring the amendment.

62. **Mr. Khane** (Secretary of the Committee) said that when an amendment was not accepted by the main sponsor and therefore deemed hostile, logic would have it, although it was not stipulated by the rules of procedure, that that amendment could not be sponsored by a sponsor of the draft resolution. When the representative of Luxembourg had rejected the amendments, she had spoken on behalf of all sponsors of the draft resolution, including the three delegations belonging to the African Group. Those delegations could however withdraw their sponsorship of the draft resolution, at which point Sierra Leone would be able to introduce the oral amendment on behalf of all member States of the African Group.

63. *The meeting was suspended at 12.10 p.m. and resumed at 12.20 p.m.*

64. **Mr. Fawundu** (Sierra Leone) said that Sierra Leone wished to propose the amendment on behalf of 51 countries in Africa instead of the African Group.

65. **Ms. Abdelkawy** (Egypt) said that the African Group was convinced that what was going on was against the rules of procedure. There was no rule of procedure that stated that if some countries belonging to a regional group were sponsors of a resolution, consequently the whole group could not introduce an amendment to the resolution.

66. The following countries were sponsors of the proposed amendment: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire,

Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. If the other three delegations from the African Group wished to do so, they could sponsor the amendment.

67. **Ms. Byaje** (Rwanda) said that Rwanda had sponsored the draft resolution but was in favour of backing the amendment since it improved the original text.

68. **Ms. Farngalo** (Liberia) said that Liberia was not a sponsor of the amendment.

69. **Mr. Komara** (Guinea) said that Guinea would like to withdraw its sponsorship of the draft resolution and support the amendment proposed by Sierra Leone on behalf of the African Group.

70. **Ms. Lucas** (Luxembourg), making a general statement on behalf of the European Union and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States in connection with the oral emendment to the draft resolution, said that the European Union and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States had met little engagement during informal negotiations with regard to finding agreement on compromise language for the divergent views presented. However, the language in the text reflected a delicate balance of the various concerns. Given that the theme of the present year's resolution was the right to education, the importance of the paragraph in question was clear. The provision in the resolution of comprehensive evidence-based education for human sexuality, based on full and accurate information, for all adolescents and youth in a manner consistent with their evolving capacities, and with appropriate guidance from parents and legal guardians, would positively impact the lifelong well-being of adolescents and youth, by helping them make informed decisions, avoiding unwanted pregnancies and improving their health, including by increasing protection against sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS. The proposed amendment would delete several important elements and the European Union and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States would therefore vote against it.

71. **Mr. Nina** (Albania), speaking in explanation of vote before the voting, said that Albania was a convinced supporter and traditional sponsor of the resolution. It was important to address the issue of comprehensive evidence-based education in the resolution. Studies had proved that rights-based education within the classroom had been an effective tool for promoting respect and responsibility. Regrettably the proposed amendment sought to delete several important elements and his delegation would therefore vote against it.

72. **Ms. Silvana García** (Uruguay), speaking on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, said that it had been of grect importance for the Group and the European Union to maintain an open, transparent and inclusive dialogue in the negotiations on the draft resolution. The central theme of the current resolution was the right to education. The paragraph in question referred to comprehensive evidence-based education on human sexuality, based on complete and precise information, which would be provided to adolescents and children in education centres, under the guidance of their parents and legal guardians. That education would allow them to develop respectful relationships based on the principles of gender equality and human rights and was a vital tool for the healthy development of children, giving them the means to enjoy a full and dignified life. The resolution on the girl child had been undertaken in a separate context and with a different thematic focus. The text had been adopted just four business days earlier and did not need to be taken into account in drafting the current resolution, the theme of which was education. For that reason, the Group would vote against the proposed amendment and encouraged other Member States to do the same.

73. *A recorded vote was taken on the oral amendment to paragraph 49 (u) of draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.28/Rev.1.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, China, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kenya,

Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam.

74. *The oral amendment to paragraph 49 (u) of draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.28/Rev.1 was rejected by 85 votes to 67, with 15 abstentions.*

75. **Mr. Eriza** (Indonesia) said that, although his delegation did not in principle have any specific objection to the formulation in the draft resolution, it had voted in favour of the amendment, because it better addressed the issue at hand and bridged differences.

76. **Ms. Denje** (Nauru) said that her delegation supported the oral amendment. The language calling upon States to develop and implement comprehensive education on human sexuality was unacceptable for her delegation, because that type of education violated the laws and cultural values of her country. The reference to modifying the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women of all ages was too vague to be properly implemented and could be interpreted in ways that also violated the laws and cultural values of her country. Although that language had been included in the previous year's resolution, it had not been adopted by consensus and it was not the language that was used in either the Convention on the Rights of the Child or the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

77. **Mr. Al-Qumim** (Yemen), speaking on behalf of Egypt, Iraq, Libya, Mauritania, Oman, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, said that those countries proposed that paragraph 49 (u) should be deleted, because it had not been agreed upon prior to its introduction.

78. **Ms. Lucas** (Luxembourg), speaking on behalf of the main sponsors of the draft resolution, said that the main sponsors did not agree with the new oral amendment and requested a vote on it.

79. **Ms. Belskaya** (Belarus) said that there was clearly no real consensus on the wording of the draft resolution. She asked whether it might have been simpler to remove the wording if the parties had not been able to reach an agreement on it during consultations, in order to introduce a consensus resolution, rather than one that resulted from pressure being exerted by the strong on the weak and the use of lobbying and other methods.

80. **Ms. Otto** (Palau) said that Palau was strongly committed to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the resolution in its original wording. Comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education delivered in an age-appropriate and culturally sensitive manner was an essential strategy to enable children and youth to realize their right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and should therefore remain part of the resolution.

81. **Mr. Khan** (Pakistan) urged the sponsors to keep the resolution free from controversy. There was already consensus on most of the resolution, but if there was controversy on one paragraph, Pakistan would strongly urge the sponsors to show some flexibility in order to arrive at a consensus and preserve such consensus for years to come.

Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting

82. **Ms. Lucas** (Luxembourg), speaking on behalf of the European Union, urged all Member States to vote against the oral amendment for the same reasons outlined previously. Paragraph 49 (u) touched on an important element and must be part of the resolution.

83. **Ms. García** (Uruguay) said that Uruguay aligned itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and would vote against the deletion of the paragraph.

84. **Mr. Bessedik** (Algeria) said that any matter related to children or women should be approached with the principle of the supreme interests of the child in mind and with respect for the particularities and the moral and cultural values of the societies concerned. In that regard, his delegation saw that there was a clear desire to impose values that were completely alien to certain societies. His delegation therefore requested a vote on the deletion of the paragraph in question.

85. **Ms. Smaila** (Nigeria) said that her delegation would vote in favour of the deletion of paragraph 49 (u). The mention of educational programmes and teaching materials should be sufficient in addressing all intended objects of the resolution, without having to single out sex education. Sex education was referenced in the resolution as comprehensive evidence-based education on human sexuality, which was an absolute contravention of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Otherwise, religious and moral instruction, cookery, practical gardening, upholstery, welding and joinery should also be included in order to ensure a balanced education and comprehensive skills acquisition of children and adolescents. Singling out sex education, even if referred to as age-appropriate, out of so many fields of human and child development reflected some countries' perception of human rights, especially children's rights; such a perception was deficient because it rested on subjective, personal, emotional and psychological premises rather than on objective human rights situations.

86. Her delegation had consistently objected to the introduction of that issue into the Committee's deliberations because there was no consensus on its ramifications and it could be used to introduce other obligations or commitments that went against Nigeria's views. While recognizing the sovereign rights of States to interpret treaties in the light of their domestic realities, particularly their customary, judicial and religious outlooks, her delegation demanded that the United Nations should not be a forum for propaganda that did not enjoy any respectability, universal consensus or legal support.

87. **Ms. Mozolina** (Russian Federation) said that her delegation was disappointed by the position of the main sponsors on the paragraph of the resolution in question and could not agree that the process of finalizing the resolution had been truly transparent. It deeply regretted that, of all the existing problems related to education, so much time, energy and resources had been devoted to discussing only the issue of sex education. In the resolution, the word "comprehensive" was only applied in relation to sex education. It seemed that there was no desire for comprehensive education in areas such as maths, geography, history and natural sciences. Apparently; comprehensive sex education was more important for the younger generation. For some reason, not as much energy was spent discussing the issues of access to health and violence against children, and yet sex education was discussed year after year. She called on the main sponsors to shift the focus away from sex education towards finding consensus and solving issues that were acceptable to all delegations across the wide spectrum of problems relating to children.

88. **Mr. Mack** (United States of America) said that the United States strongly supported the paragraph as drafted and would vote against the proposed amendment.

89. **Mr. Clyne** (New Zealand), speaking on behalf of Australia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland, said that those countries, in the light of the outrageous exaggeration in many of the statements that had been made, urged delegations to read the text of the resolution and the relevant Conventions and jurisprudence. It remained convinced of the importance of comprehensive evidence-based education on human sexuality and called on all delegations to vote against the hostile amendment.

90. **Ms. Riley** (Barbados) said that Barbados, as a member of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, was a proud sponsor of the draft resolution and fully aligned itself with the statements made by the representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the main sponsors. The language of the paragraph was the result of careful negotiations. For example, the reference to comprehensive evidence-based education on human

sexuality was applied only to adolescents and youth and was armoured in caveats. In a resolution dealing with the right to education it was absolutely necessary to make a reference to education in that area for adolescents and youth. Barbados would therefore vote against the proposed amendment.

91. *A recorded vote was taken on the proposal to delete paragraph 49 (u) of draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.28/Rev.1.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, China, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Togo, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Myanmar, Nepal, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam.

92. *The proposal to delete paragraph 49 (u) of draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.28/Rev.1 was rejected by 90 votes to 63, with 11 abstentions.*

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.